

# PARENT to Parent

Quarterly newsletter for parents and carers in

**HEYWOOD**

June - September 09  
Issue 3

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## Meanwood's Mosaic Masterpiece

By ELSA ACKORA

**As part of National Parents Week we decided it would be nice to do something for the whole centre, something that could be permanent. As the first Meanwood parents forum group, we wanted to make our mark so to speak. The Parenting Support Team assisted us with the funding.**

After thrashing around some ideas we decided on making a mosaic for the entrance, to welcome people into it. With the help of a local community artist, Steve Foster, who guided us on what we needed to do and supplied the art materials, we decided on a bright and colourful design, which we designed ourselves. Trying to break the tradition that the Sure Start children's centres are for mothers only, and as Meanwood is quite active in encouraging fathers to attend their sessions we decided on a picture of a dad with his child.



We met every Tuesday for a few weeks and bit by bit we saw our work come to life. I think I speak for everybody involved: we really enjoyed it. It was fun, relaxing and it was a great way to get to know other members in the parenting forum a little bit better. All the while knowing that our children were being well looked after next door and enjoying themselves just as much. My son loves going to Meanwood Sure Start Children's Centre. One of the weeks coincided with half-term week and

we were able to bring along our older children to do their bit. My 5 year old daughter loves passing by the mosaic and pointing out to her brother that she has done "that little bit of sky". It is great to see it finished and hanging on the wall as you go in and to know that you were involved in creating something that will welcome parents for many years to come.

### A centre near you

If you care for children under 5 and would like to find out more about what's going on at a Children's Centre near you, please feel free to pop in and see us.

**Castleton Children's Centre**  
Castleton Primary School  
Melville Street  
Castleton OL11 2PL  
01706 516310

**Derby Street Children's Centre**  
Derby Street  
Heywood OL10 4QJ  
01706 369889

**Meanwood Children's Centre**  
Meanwood Primary School  
Churchill Street  
Rochdale OL12 7DJ  
01706 753240

**Woodland Children's Centre**  
Woodland Primary school  
Regent Street  
Heywood OL10 3BX  
01706 624916

# Parents learn first aid

In January, Cheryl Nield, a health improvement practitioner for Rochdale and Middleton Healthy Living Initiative was able to secure some funding from Neighbourhood Renewal to provide Meanwood Sure Start Children's Centre with ten alternative therapy sessions and an accredited first aid course.



The children's centre provided crèche places to support both of the courses.

The first aid course was run over two sessions and covered basic first aid, dressings and bandages. The group had to attend both sessions and complete a short test at the end to be awarded with their certificate. All twelve successfully completed their first aid.

Well Done Everyone!

Both courses were thoroughly enjoyed by everyone who attended.

"I would love to do a four day first aid course next, or food safety as these are good qualifications to have on your C.V."

"Really good would like to arrange other courses like that."

"I've really enjoyed the relaxation sessions, the time to chat to other mums, and the crèche facilities are excellent."

**For more information on other courses or sessions at Meanwood Children's Centre please call in to our drop-in on Thursdays between 1pm-2.30pm or ring us on 01706 753240.**

## Full of good advice

By SHARON WILSON

**Staff at Castleton Sure Start Children's Centre have been a great support to me by helping me fill in application forms for jobs and by giving me loads of advice about benefits and returning to work.**

I also received smoking cessation help and advice at the centre and I have managed to give up smoking thanks to them.

The staff have always been there for a chat when things have got difficult.

I have used the 'time for you' crèche which helped to build my little boy's confidence and it gave me a break at a time when I had a lot of things I needed to sort out.

A big thank you to Sure Start and to Castleton Children's Centre.

## Heywood Survey

Thank you to everyone who completed a User Satisfaction Survey when using the Children's Centre services. Your responses have been fantastic with many of you praising the work we do and how the centres have made a difference to you and your children.

- 389 responses from the Heywood area
  - 51 from the Castleton Centre
  - 94 from the Derby Street Centre
  - 67 from the Howard Street Centre
  - 118 from the Meanwood Centre
  - 59 from the Woodland Centre
- Ratings of Very Good for the Heywood area for –
  - Welcome – 89%
  - Usefulness of sessions – 84%
  - Time of sessions – 66%
  - Frequency of sessions – 67%
  - Choice of sessions available – 70%
- 60% rated the Heywood children's centres as 10 out of 10 for the overall service.
- 87% of respondents attend a play and education session, i.e. Stay and Play. Also, when asked the question which sessions have proved useful the comments for each centre in Heywood mention the Stay and Play sessions.
- We have taken into account the improvements/comments suggested and have put together a list, located in each of the children's centres, stating what action will be carried out and an estimated time scale.

We will be carrying out another survey later in the year so we can continue to offer the best services for your area. We feel it is essential to listen to and value your views and we take on board all comments made. We strive to work in partnership with all parents and carers and see this consultation as being an important part of this process. So, please look out for the surveys within the children's centres later in the year to have your say!

# Play to Learn

## Men Behaving Dadly



By COLIN JOHNSON, Parent  
**Men Behaving Dadly is a monthly stay and play session for children and their dads, grandads, uncles and any other male carer at Woodland Sure Start Children's Centre. It runs from 5pm – 7pm on the first Monday of every month. This enables dads who are working to come along too. There is lots to do and tea is also provided!**

I really enjoyed spending time with my daughter and watching her interact with other children.

It is great that I can take my daughter to a friendly play session, usually my wife takes her but because it's at tea time it gives me the chance to take her for a change.

It's good that it's just dads because we get to chat to each other. Me and my daughter thoroughly enjoy it, it is a relaxing environment after a hard day at work. Looking forward to the next one!

By LYNSEY PLATT

**Bringing my son Lucian into this world was by far the best moment of my life, and I have enjoyed every minute with him. When he was 3 months old, I felt that we were ready to venture out. I was a little hesitant, but Gaz my supportive partner came along with us to the new baby play at Derby Street Sure Start Children's Centre.**

We all had a great time and Lucian loved painting. I liked attending the baby groups with him and the staff were always very friendly and made us feel welcome and often popped over for a chat. When Lucian was 9 months old we moved house. Following the move, I found it a little hard to cope and wouldn't leave the house. My health visitor put me in



touch with Rose the parent empowerment worker at Derby Street Children's Centre. She supported me and told me about the 'time for you' crèche. It saved my sanity and gave me the confidence to start attending the groups again.

I have seen a big change in my little guy since we started going back again. He has come on leaps and bounds and he no longer needs me to be right next

to him as he plays and explores, but does still love to come and get me to show me the amazing things he finds.

I have attended a few courses and have just finished one called play to learn, a

session that looks at different stages of development. We made puppets to link with the topic of communication and had great fun getting creative and messy. It is a really interesting course with lots of great tips on how to encourage your child's development. We took photos along the way and created a great photo collage to finish. I had great fun on this course and have met new mums and made new friends.

## PARENT FORUM

By PAULA COPE, SARAH WOOD, LINDSEY ELLIOTT AND BECKY MCKENZIE

**Parent Forum at Derby Street started in January 2009. The group meet on a monthly basis to discuss events in the centre, look at training and job opportunities, share ideas and support the needs of the centre.**

The group is friendly and has a relaxed atmosphere so parents feel happy to talk and share experiences with one another. It's a great time to discuss events within the centre.

We regularly invite visitors. Emma, the nutritionist came in to talk to us about healthy food bags. Louise, the health visitor came to the group to discuss basic first aid. Sandra, children's centre teacher, came in this month to talk about communication friendly spaces and the group have volunteered to pilot the scheme.

A crèche is provided for the children while parents attend the forum and the parents enjoy spending time with other parents.

Paula said "It's great, I've met other parents and my child is interacting with other children, I've found it really fun and interesting."

Sarah, mum to Ella, said "I love the friendly and relaxed atmosphere and taking part in the group sessions."

We are planning to do lots of fun things in the future and all new members are welcome.

# Fun for the family

By SAMANTHA WOODALL

I am a busy working mum with two children, so days off are precious and allow me to spend quality time with my children. I have Scarlett who is 2 years and Sam at 16 years, a big gap I know, but I love it. I was introduced to Sure Start about a year ago and I've never looked back. I just wished I'd attended the wide variety of sessions earlier.



My days off are arranged around Sure Start groups. We use three groups now: Sandbrook, Castleton and Meanwood. As my work involves shifts having different sessions on different days at each centre enables me to attend the groups Scarlett most enjoys, such as messy monsters, stay and play and big cook little cook.

Scarlett attends a private day nursery twice a week and participates in activities such as painting with the staff, but this is where working parents miss out watching their

children flourish and learning new skills.

Sure Start groups give me the chance to watch and participate with Scarlett; doing art and crafts, cooking and role play in the beautifully kitted out children's toy kitchen. It also enables me to observe her integration with other children. Scarlett has become more confident and her language and social skills have developed.

As for the staff, how welcoming and friendly!

I work with new mums and can't promote Sure Start enough. It has totally changed

both mine and Scarlett's life. It's fabulous for mums of all ages with no 'clicky' groups, both myself and Scarlett have made many new friends. Everyone is there for a reason, to ensure their child has the best start in life.

Our family have recently been to Centre Parcs on holiday. Can you believe they offer stay and play sessions and messy monsters at a cost of eight pounds for a 45 minute session? How lucky do I feel now when I attend 1-2 hour sessions at Sure Start groups absolutely free!!!!

## Cushion the CREDIT CRUNCH



### Information and advice on the:

- Costs of Childcare
  - Tax Credits
- Childcare Vouchers
- Early Years Grant
  - FSA Parents Guide to Money

For more information on making childcare affordable, call


Rochdale Borough **FAMILY INFORMATION SERVICE**

on **01706 719900**

Or freephone from any Children's Centre  
[info.childcare@rochdale.gov.uk](mailto:info.childcare@rochdale.gov.uk)  
[www.rochdale.gov.uk/childcare](http://www.rochdale.gov.uk/childcare)



**Sure Start**




## LEARN TO BE A POSITIVE PARENT

A course for Mums, Dads Grandparents and Carers.  
**Put the pieces of the parenting jigsaw together**

Learn and speak with other parents about:

- ★ NORMAL DEVELOPMENT AND SENSIBLE EXPECTATIONS
- ★ ACTIVE LISTENING
- ★ RESPECTFUL COMMUNICATION
- ★ YOUR CHILD'S EMOTIONAL NEEDS
- ★ BOUNDARIES AND DISCIPLINE
- ★ ENCOURAGEMENT AND PLAY

Call **01706 719900** for further information




# Sure Start